

# Quality of Life



South Carolina  
Department of Commerce

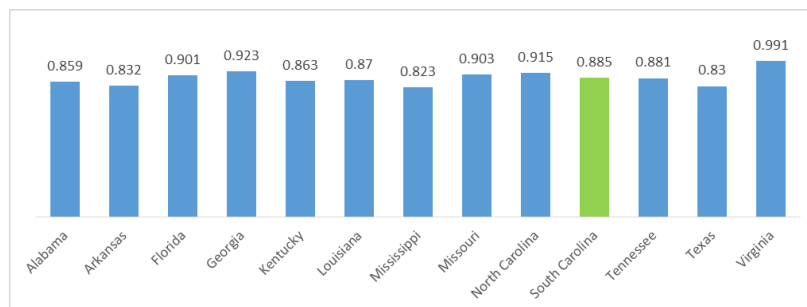
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## Cost of Living: Providing More Buying Power

The annual cost of living index which compares all states, metropolitan areas, and counties in the United States for 2011 shows that the cost of living in South Carolina cost is 12% percent less than the national average and is the 11<sup>th</sup> lowest in the nation.

South Carolina's effective purchasing power is \$1.12, which means the average value of \$1 across the nation can purchase \$1.12 worth of goods and services in South Carolina. *Source: SC Dept. of Commerce "Annual Cost of Living Index"*

## Cost of Living Index by State

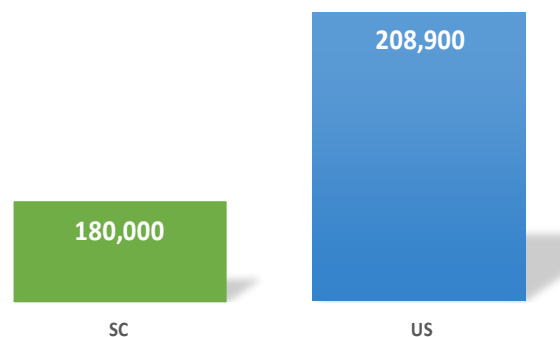


## Real Estate: More Affordable

According to the Census Bureau home ownership rate data, South Carolina is the 6<sup>th</sup> best state for home ownership with a 72.9% rate in 2014. *Source: 2014 Home Ownership Rate, Census Bureau*

The median home sale price in South Carolina is significantly lower than the national average. According to the data from South Carolina Association of Realtors and National Association of Realtors, the median price in South Carolina is more than \$28,000 lower than national average in 2014.

## Median Home Sale Price



## Public Education: Preparing Students for Success

### Governor's School for Arts and Humanities

Established in 1980, the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities (SCGSAG) is a public school residential high school for emerging artists. The school gives artistically talented high school students from across the state the opportunity to study their art in a supportive environment of artistic and academic excellence. Arts concentrations include Creative Writing, Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts. SCGSAG offers a top-notch faculty where 80 percent hold a Ph.D and 100 percent hold a master's degree. *Source: Governor's School for Science and Mathematics*

### America's Best high Schools

The annual ranking by U.S. News & World Report rated North Charleston's Academic Magnet High School 22nd among 1,750 ranked as the best in the United States. The ranking is based on how the schools served all students with state proficiency standards as the measuring benchmarks. Schools that met proficiency standards were assessed on how well they prepared students for college-level work. *Source: U.S. News & World Report, December 2009*



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## Higher Education: Providing Better Funding Opportunities for South Carolina Residents

Approved by the South Carolina General Assembly in 1998, the Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship program administered at each eligible public and independent higher education institution in South Carolina. The LIFE Scholarship may be used toward the cost of attending a college for up to eight terms. South Carolina's LIFE Scholarship amounts are over 30 percent higher than comparable programs in other Southeastern states. From 2012 to 2013, more than \$175 million was distributed through 30,000 scholarships. *Source: South Carolina Higher Education Statistical Abstract 2014*

Maximum Scholarship Amount per Semester, 2015

State	Scholarship	2-Year Institution	4-Year Public Institution	4-Year Private Institution
Florida	Florida Bright Futures	\$567	\$639	\$927
Mississippi	MTAG	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
North Carolina	Education Lottery Scholarship	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
South Carolina	LIFE Scholarship	\$2,500	\$3,750	\$3,750
Tennessee	HOPE Scholarship	\$1,500	\$2,250	\$2,250

*Source: Compiled by the South Carolina Department of Commerce from state scholarship websites, 2015*

## Jobs: Offering Challenging Opportunities

Since 2003, the South Carolina Centers of Economic Excellence Program has created nearly 10,000 knowledge-based jobs and has brought \$1.5 billion in investments to SC.

South Carolina is ranked as a top five state in employment concentration for several goal-oriented careers including:

- Chemical Engineers
- Nuclear Technicians
- Industrial Engineering Technicians
- Industrial Engineers

*Source: SC Centers of Economic Excellence*

## Activities: Many Enjoyable Opportunities

### Natural Settings

- Appalachian foothills to the northwest
- 187 miles of Atlantic Ocean coastline to the east
- Numerous lakes offer opportunities for boating, fishing, various water sports and outdoor activities

### Golf

- More than 400 championship golf courses
- Five courses on Golf Digest's 100 Greatest Courses
- Seven courses on Golf Digest's 100 Greatest Public Courses

### Sports

- Professional golf in Augusta (The Masters) and Hilton Head (Heritage)
- Professional tennis in Charleston (Volvo Cars Open)

## Recent Rankings: South Carolina is Recognized Nationally

South Carolina's attraction for foreign investors was underscored in IBM's **2014 Global Location Trends** report. For the third consecutive year, South Carolina came in 1st in the nation for jobs through foreign investment. The data is derived from IBM's Global Investment Locations database which tracks announcements by companies on their location decisions. *Source: IBM, 2014 Global Location Trends, September 2015.*

**Area Development** named South Carolina a **2015 Gold Shovel Award winner** in recognition of economic development projects undertaken in 2014. This is the **seventh** year in a row that South Carolina has received a Gold or Silver Shovel Award in its population category. South Carolina was a Gold Shovel Award recipient in 2014, 2012, and 2011 and a Silver Shovel Award recipient in 2013, 2010, and 2009. *Source: Area Development, June 2015.*

The **American Economic Development Institute (AEDI)** and Pollina Corporate named **South Carolina #9** in the Top 10 Pro-Business States study. The study is based on 32 factors controlled by state government, including taxes, human resources, education, right-to-work legislation, energy costs, infrastructure spending, regulatory environment, workers compensation laws, economic incentive programs, and state economic development efforts. *Source: American Economic Development Institute, July 2014*

